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Getting Your Feed In Bulk

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Information 1

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BULK handling of feed saves farmers both time and money. Saves them money because bulk feed is priced lower than feed in bags ... nearly always by at least the cost of the bags ... often by added discounts of a dollar or two a ton. Saves them time because they don't have to load, unload, open, empty, and save the sacks for credit or for sale to itinerant bag buyers. A bulk truck can deliver twice as much feed in a day as one handling sacked feed.

Farmers can feed much larger herds or flocks in the same length of time. Women, children or physically handicapped persons can also carry on a good-sized feeding operation.

Bulk feed has limitations, however. It is not adapted to the farmer who feeds less than one ton a week - enough for, say 500 hens, 10 dairy cows, or the equivalent in other livestock. While most of the pictures here show poultry feeding, bulk feed is working out well for farmers needing these larger volumes for feeding livestock.

To obtain full advantage of bulk feed you should properly plan your farm layout. Talk to your county agent and farmers who have had experience with it. Be sure to clear the type, size, and arrangement of storage bins with your co-op manager or other feed supplier.

You can obtain more detailed information from FCS Circular 3, "Delivering Feed in Bulk," furnished on request by the Farmer Cooperative Service.

--To bulk handling



Mills must make changes to provide bulk service. Some build overhead bins for feed to drop into 3- or 4-compartment trucks on large scales. Entire load may go to one farm or each compartment may go to a different farm. Other mills have separate bins for weighing farmers' orders.

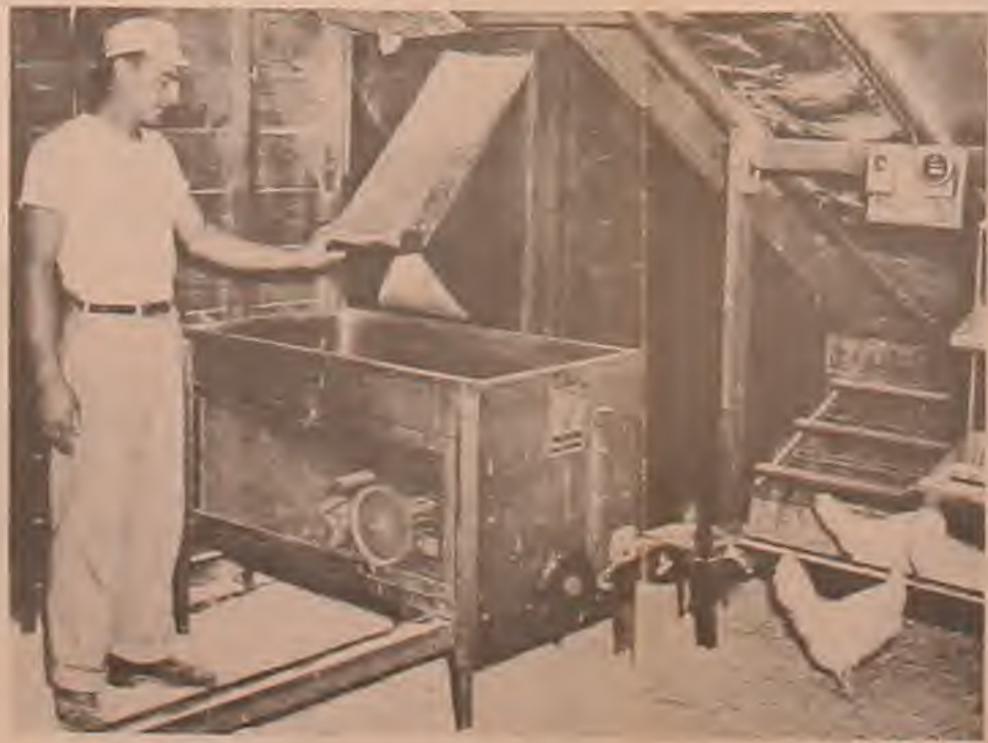
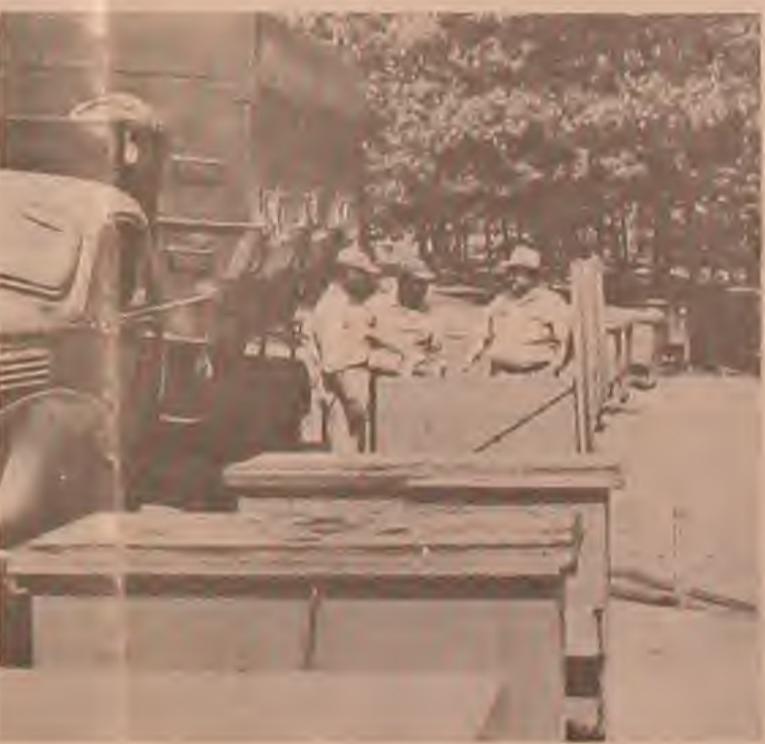


Bins vary widely in shape and material. Notice the windbreak to keep light feeds from blowing as they come from the bin. Some bulk trucks can also load a few bags of chick starter or medicated feed on the side of the bulk tank.

Farmers use many different kinds of bins for bulk feed. They can build their own from plans. Many feed co-ops provide their members with steel bins at cost. Farmers often can use first floor or overhead bins satisfactorily without making many changes.



This farmer has his feed bin built right into his poultry house. A specially built truck hooks on to the pipe and blows feed into the bin. At left, pneumatic truck of Oregon Egg Producers, Portland, can blow feed into 3- or 4-story laying houses without difficulty.



Specially built trucks unload pelleted feed by gravity into self-feed hoppers on large duck farms of members of a cooperative on Long Island. At left, bulk feed drops from bin into hopper of automatic feeder. With this and other recent labor saving equipment, one man can easily take care of 10,000 laying birds.

For suggestions as to what the farmer and his co-op feed mill need to do to adapt to bulk feed operations, see back of leaflet.

Getting Your Feed In Bulk



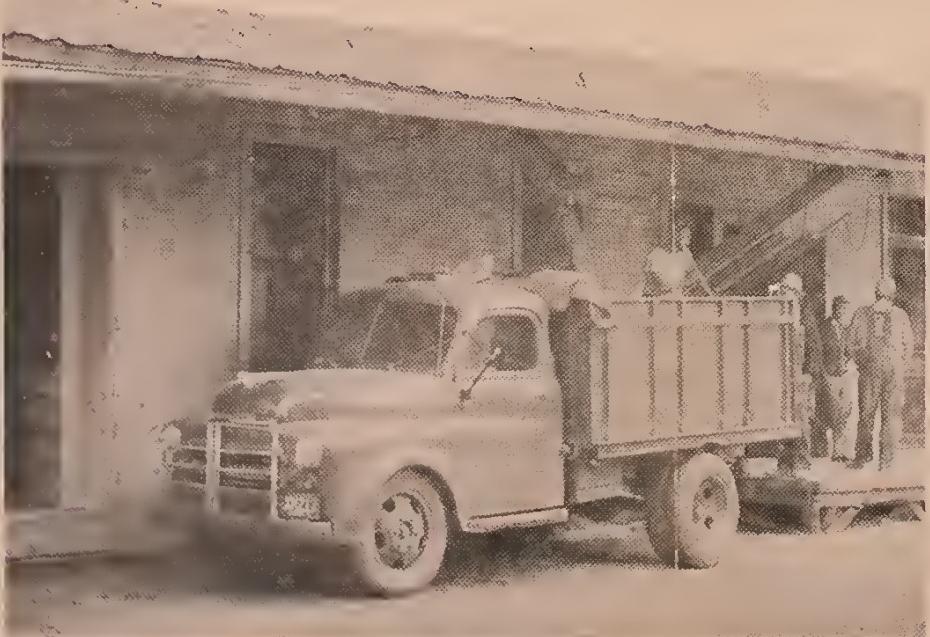
When packed in usual 100-pound cotton or burlap bags, sacks must be loaded on trucks or railroad cars for delivery to local feed store and then again on trucks for delivery to the farm bin.



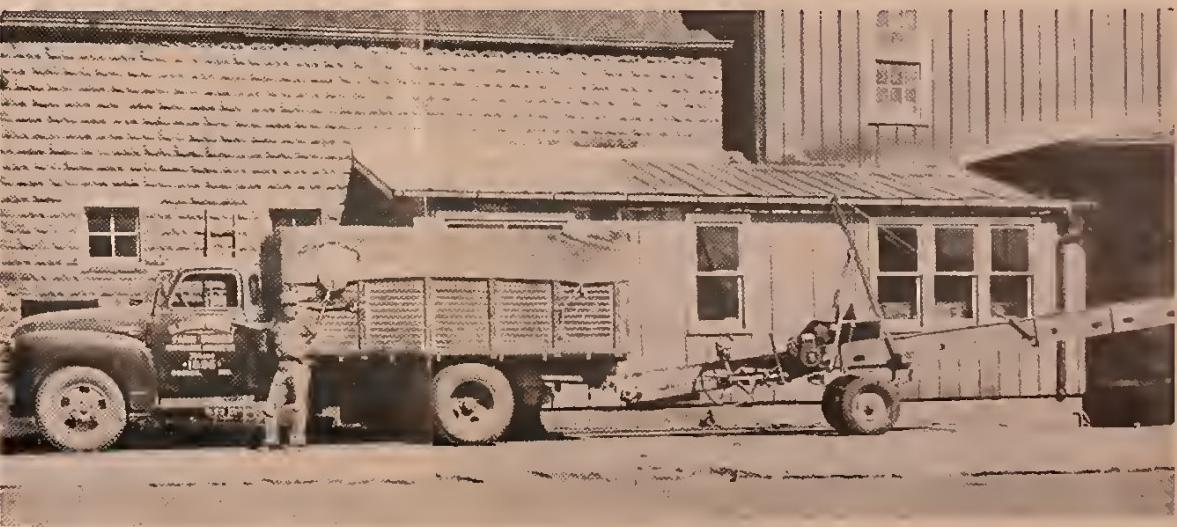
Farmers then stack the bags in the feed room. As the farmer uses the feed, he must open, empty, and save the bags for credit or sale.



When the bag supply became critical during World War II, the Poultry Producers of Central California at San Francisco developed this first mechanical bulk truck for feed.



There are many stages of development in bulk feed handling. At this mill, feed is merely spouted into an ordinary box bed truck. The feed must be unloaded with a scoop shovel so only part of the advantages of bulk feed are obtained.



Feeling their way with this new development, other mills use truck bodies with a screw conveyor to pull feed to the back of the truck. A portable elevator trails behind the truck then conveys the feed into the farmer's bin.

Getting Your Feed In Bulk

What Farmer and his Co-op Feed Mill Need to Do:

The Farmer - -

1. Have firm footing for truck both as it drives to the bin and when it unloads.
2. Try to locate the bin so the truck can reach it easily.
3. Don't have overhead obstructions in the way of the truck.
4. Have bins oversize so they need not run empty before they will hold a full order.
5. Gear feeding methods and equipment to the use of bulk feed so as to obtain in full its advantages.

The Feed Mill - -

1. Arrange plant facilities to load trucks quickly and keep them on the road.
2. Adapt plant facilities to bulk needs of farmers.
3. Assist farmers in planning and obtaining bulk feed layouts that will be most satisfactory.
4. Point out to farmers that bulk feed doesn't separate ... often an idea holding back development of bulk feed handling.